



Friday Notes is designed to enhance communication among various agricultural sectors, educators, students, and the public who are interested in a variety of plant, animal, food, and environmental issues. Friday Notes advocates the pursuit of credible, unbiased, science-based information. Material contained in linked articles is from the original authors and does not necessarily reflect the views of CAST.

In This Issue....

- [Animal Agriculture News](#)
- [Food Science & Safety News](#)
- [Plant & Environmental News](#)
- [International News](#)
- [General Interest News](#)

Events and Announcements



Most fairs have been canceled, but many rural areas have held [revamped livestock shows](#). As one young handler in Colorado said, "It's a nice feeling, and it's a nice smell." A whiff of something normal in a pandemic era.

The United States Census Bureau provides [this site to facilitate response](#) and this [press release to explain updated procedures and timelines](#). Some are concerned that an [earlier deadline](#) could harm the overall process.

College Aggies Online--from the Animal Ag Alliance-- [connects college students](#) who want to share about animal agriculture.

CAST College Corner

[Penn State](#) has a new agricultural engineering fabrication shop ready to enhance fruit research.

[University of Nebraska](#) Extension

August 7, 2020

COVID-19 Research Updates

Headline announcements continue to come attached to the word "potential," but these are a few of the many recent items about coronavirus research:



(1) Kansas State University virologists published a study explaining a [possible therapeutic treatment for COVID-19](#), (2) Regeneron Pharmaceuticals Inc. said its [COVID-19 antibody drug combination](#) both prevented and treated the disease in rhesus macaques and hamsters, (3) this site covers [global research projects](#) regarding coronavirus, and (4) this page contains a [list of funding opportunities](#) specific to Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19).

News and Views

USDA, Climate, and Mystery Seeds: The USDA issued a new report that focuses on [how agricultural systems are impacted by climate change](#). The full [report is available here](#). The agency also provided updated information about the "mystery" or [unsolicited packages of seeds](#) some received in the mail.

Ag Innovation Agenda: The USDA asked for comments about its [Agriculture Innovation Agenda](#). The ASA, CSSA, SSSA, ASABE, ASBP, ESA, and NAPB joined an [intersociety task force](#) to respond with suggestions about agriculture [education, diversity, economics](#), and more.

Global and U.S. Statistics: This link accesses the [COVID-19 Dashboard](#) compiled by the Center for Systems Science and Engineering at Johns Hopkins University.

BIOequality Agenda: The Biotechnology Innovation Organization launched an action plan to [find solutions to inequities](#) that impact the bio sciences--ranging from health care, the next generation of scientists, and opportunities for women, Blacks, and other minorities.

Food Recall: Authorities identified red onions from a California farm as the likely source of hundreds of cases of a [widespread Salmonella Newport outbreak](#). Check this [CDC food safety alert](#)

is offering two-day safety courses on tractors and ATVs.

[University of Florida and UC-Davis](#) researchers studied effects of heat stress on dairy cows.

Check throughout *Friday Notes* to see more featured articles from member universities.

CAST Social Media

Visit our website



CAST [welcomes ideas](#) for future publications and projects.

for more information.

News from the Far Side of the Barn

Car Hop Nostalgia:

A [revived eating trend](#) includes roller skates, window trays, and fast food (photo at right).



Monkey Business

(video): As the pandemic has changed conditions, [monkeys have taken over](#) a Thailand tourist town.

Bovine Siren's Call (video): This Swedish woman performs an [ancient Swedish herding call](#) technique--a *Kulning*.

CAST Updates

Agriculture and the Microbiome

CAST Issue Paper 68



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On Monday, August 24, the new CAST Issue Paper, *Agriculture and the Microbiome*, will be released. The webinar will take place noon CDT Tuesday, August 25. You can [register for the free webinar here](#).

Agriculture is one of the keystones of human civilization, providing a reliable, stationary source of food that allowed ancient populations to grow and eventually build cities. Modern agriculture is successful today because of advances in mechanization, breeding, nutrients (e.g., fertilization), and pest and disease management, all of which enhance crop productivity and provide greater food security. Yet even with this progress, the amount of cropland per capita has declined, available farmland is being consumed by urban development at unprecedented rates, and crop yields are plateauing. Crop yields must continue to increase and the gap between plant productivity and consumption must be bridged. Expanding the use of crop microbiomes to improve plant production is that next agricultural revolution.

Q&A Session Available from *Hormones Webinar*

The [questions and answers](#) from the latest webinar have been posted online. Be sure to check out the [recorded webinar, publication, Ag quickCAST, and Student Study Guide](#) from *Impacts on Human Health and Safety of Naturally Occurring and Supplemental Hormones in Food Animals*.



Impacts on Human Health and Safety of Naturally Occurring and Supplemental Hormones in Food Animals

Upcoming Publications

- *Agriculture and the Microbiome* (August 24 release, webinar at Noon Central on August 25)
- *The Importance of Communicating Empirically Based Science for Society* (September release)
- *Food Biofortification--Reaping the Benefits of Science to Overcome Hidden Hunger* (October release)
- *Ground and Aerial Robots for Agricultural Production: Opportunities and Challenges* (November release)

Animal Agriculture and Environmental News

Genome Editing (video): Alison van Eenennaam (UC-Davis and [2014 BCCA](#) recipient) [discusses genome editing](#).

Lab Grown: This company announced a large [reduction in the cost](#) of the growth medium for their lab-grown protein. Note: Check out the CAST Commentary [Producing Food Products from Cultured Animal Tissues](#).

Swine Microbiome: A North Carolina State University study looks at the role of [microbiome and swine health](#).

Mail Chicks: Poultry experts want people to be wary of [buying chicks via mail](#) during the pandemic with decreased delivery times.

Sow Feeding Systems: These three pen and feed design strategies can [improve sow well-being](#) and performance.

Protein's Role in Human Health: The beef industry provides this summary of how the [significance of protein](#) in human health has emerged over the last several decades.



Goats are part of ComEd's landscape efforts, as we find out in this interview with a specialist about the ["Goatternship" program](#).

And this video shows a [goatweed control program](#) in the city of Calgary and around the province of Alberta.

Food Science and Safety News

But Does It Have a Fishy Smell? A [type of fish-free "tuna"](#) that looks, tastes, and mimics the texture of the real fish is hoping to get its hooks into the plant-based market.

Community Food Programs: People across the country are demonstrating compassion, ingenuity, and solidarity as they work together to [support local programs](#).

The Good, the Bad, and the Gut: "Friendly" *E. coli* may [protect the gut](#) from a deadly version of the strain.

Food Safety: This site from CropLife International focuses on [plant science and food safety](#).

Monsters and Brussels Sprouts: Dole Food Company is adding recipes, videos, social media content, and digital downloads to its summer [promotion of unfamiliar fruits and vegetables through Pixar's "Monsters, Inc."](#)

Milky Olympic Performance (video): Gold medalist Katie Ledecky swam the length of a pool with a [glass of](#)



The dairy industry relaunched the "Got Milk?" ad campaign—this time [with fewer celebrities and a social](#)

[chocolate milk on her head](#), never spilling a drop.

[media flair](#) (related link at left).

Plant Agriculture and Environmental News

Digital Sequence Information: According to this research, [open access to genetic sequence data](#) maximizes value to scientists, farmers, and society.

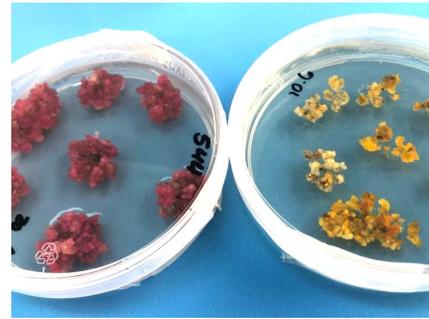
Open Data (related to above): Click here to [access the CAST Commentary](#) titled *Enabling Open-source Data Networks in Public Agricultural Research*.

Managing Crop Loss: Managing crop stress is paramount. These methods [increase crop production](#) and minimize nitrogen loss.

Plant Protein: This research says [adding plant protein](#) to your diet can be a health boost

Quality Food for Heifers: A new *Agronomy Journal* study tested a sorghum sudangrass hybrid and eastern gamagrass as an [alternative forage option](#).

New EPA Herbicide--Public Comments Welcome: The EPA is proposing to register a [new contact herbicide to help manage weed resistance](#).



CSIRO scientists discovered how to grow [colored cotton](#), removing the need for harmful chemical dyes.

University of Arkansas experts studied the yields, flavors, and “seed or seedless” [nature of watermelons](#).

International News

Where Zen Has a Buzz to It (video): The country of Slovenia has a long [tradition of using the sounds of bees buzzing to relax](#) everyone from firefighters to children.

The Surf Was Really Up! (video): Beachgoers in Australia got an [extremely close-up view of two whales](#) in Sydney.

Opening Schools: This article looks at [what happened in four countries](#) where K-12 schools either stayed open during the pandemic or resumed in-person instruction.

Where Sweat is Popular: Despite its name, Pocari Sweat, a [Japanese sports drink is popular](#) across Asia.

Solar Canals: In India, authorities are turning the country's [canals into glittering trails of solar panels](#)



Working at the Cow Wash: In the preparation for a special Muslim festival, this Pakistani car-wash owner sees much of his [business switch from cars to cows](#).

General Interest News

Cats and Food Puzzles (video): UC-Davis research shows cats would [rather eat 'free' food](#) than work for it.

Here Comes the Sun: In some parts of the country, farmers are [looking to solar power](#) for their operational needs.

Wild Horse and Burro Event: A University of Nevada-Reno program is involved with [4-H students who are preparing four wild horses and one burro](#) for adoption.

AI in Agriculture: This report offers information about the overview and scope of the [artificial intelligence market](#) along with its drivers, restraints, and trends.

Government Research Grants: USDA-NIFA funds are going to an Iowa State University professor [working to turn manure into fuel](#) and to [several programs](#) at the University of Missouri College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources.



Paying It Forward: A scholarship student herself, North Carolina A&T State's Maya Johnson [established a scholarship to help high school students](#) buy books for their freshmen year at college.

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- * Corteva Agriscience
- * CropLife America
- * Crop Science Society of America
- * Entomological Society of America
- * Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy
- * Bayer
- * National Cattlemen's Beef Association, a Contractor to the Beef Checkoff
- * National Corn Growers Association/Iowa Corn Promotion Board
- * National Milk Producers Federation
- * National Pork Board
- * North Carolina Biotechnology Center
- * North Central Weed Science Society
- * Northeastern Weed Science Society
- * Poultry Science Association
- * Rural Sociological Society
- * Society for In Vitro Biology
- * Soil Science Society of America
- * Syngenta Crop Protection
- * The Fertilizer Institute
- * Tuskegee University
- * United Soybean Board
- * University of Nevada-Reno
- * U.S. Poultry and Egg Association
- * Weed Science Society of America
- * Western Society of Weed Science

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The Science Source for Food,
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